

Submission  
No 122

**INQUIRY INTO FEASIBILITY OF UNDERGROUNDING  
THE TRANSMISSION INFRASTRUCTURE FOR  
RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECTS**

**Name:** Name suppressed  
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Partially  
Confidential

To the Committee responsible for considering this submission,

I am writing to encourage you to consider the possibility of undergrounding the power infrastructure for Snowy 2.0. I understand that there are many ways of assessing the feasibility of an option associated with a development of this nature. One can consider the environmental impact, the economic impact; both in the short term in the cost of construction and the long term, negatively in the cost to agriculture and tourism, and positively in the form of base-load power for industry. Social impact may also be considered in both the short and long term. And all these factors should be weighed in this discussion. The issue is which factors will be considered and what weight will be assigned each factor.

It would be easiest to take the short term approach and consider only short term costs and benefits, however while election cycles may press towards that approach, responsible management should be seeing implications far into the future. Where would our nation be now if governments had not considered the long term value of national parks, or the ecological value of protecting wild places?

I myself am unsure of the true cost-benefit of undergrounding the lines to transport the power from Snowy 2.0 to the Hume and north. What I am sure of, is that I haven't yet seen a solid and convincing analysis of the long term impacts and benefits of undergrounding as opposed to overhead lines. The Snowy Valleys is only now developing as an outdoor adventure and tourism gateway for Canberra and Wagga, and blighting the landscape with massive power infrastructure would be a serious blow to such developments.

Having fought the 2020 fires in Batlow as a retained firefighter I am acutely aware of the need to minimise fire risk in these sometimes inaccessible valleys, and as an accountant who has watched farmers rebuilding their dreams after the fire I know something of what it costs a family to stay on the land and make it work with so many variables against them.

I can only caution the decision makers against a legacy of carelessness with the stakes as high as they are, and with implications stretching forward for many generations. I implore you to give wider considerations the value they deserve and include them in an extensive inquiry into the issue of overhead v. underground power options.

Yours faithfully,